

Appl. No. : 10/070602
Filed : September 13, 2002

REMARKS

In the Office Action mailed January 9, 2004 (Paper No. 12), the Examiner rejected Claims 37 and 39-54 of the pending application under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Holley (US Patent No. 4,884,841) in view of Kumarasurier (US Patent No. 5,444,877). In addition, the Applicant acknowledges the Examiner's indication that Claim 38 is objected to as being dependent on a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. By this paper, the Applicant amends the base claim 37 with the further limitation of previous claim 38 and thus believes that the combination is allowable as indicated by the Examiner. Similar amendments are made to Claim 49 and the Applicant believes that independent Claims 37 and 49 as amended herein distinguish the art of record and that the claims depending therefrom properly further limit the claimed invention and are also patentable under the requirements of 35 U.S.C. §103a. The Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration of the above-identified application in the light of the amendments and remarks contained herein.

In the Office Action, the Examiner further objected to the drawings under 37 C.F.R. 1.83(a) for failing to illustrate every feature of the invention specified in the claims. Figure 7b has been added to illustrate originally disclosed aspects of the insert having concertina sides as claimed in Claim 45. The Applicant believes that the amended drawings now illustrate every feature of the invention specified in the claims and that as the feature was originally disclosed in the application as filed. Addition of Figure 7b does not constitute the entrance of new matter.

In the Office Action, the Examiner further objected to the specification because reference characters "122" and "133" have both been used to designate "catch" on page 17 of the specification. The Applicant thanks the Examiner for noting this discrepancy and the proper correction has been made to the specification. Therefore, the Applicant believes that the amended specification is now in condition for acceptance.

In the Office Action, the Examiner rejected Claims 37 and 49 of the pending application under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Holley in view of Kumarasurier. However, the Applicant notes that claim 37 has been amended to include the subject matter of claim 38. In the Office Action, the Examiner deemed Claim 37 allowable if rewritten in independent form to include the subject matter of Claim 38. Additionally, the reference to "sleeve" in Claim 38 has

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been amended to refer to "collar" as disclosed in the specification. Furthermore, to overcome the rejection of Claim 49, the Applicant has amended Claim 49 in a similar manner as with Claim 37 to include the subject matter of Claim 38.

For these reasons, the Applicant submits that Claims 37, 38, and 49 as amended herein are patentable over the art of record and respectfully requests prompt allowance of the same. In addition, the Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration of the remaining claims 39-48 and 50-54, which further define patentable subject matter and are allowable due to their dependencies on Claims 37 and 49.


From the foregoing, the Applicant believes that the present application is in condition for allowance, and the Applicant requests the prompt allowance of the same. The undersigned has made a good faith effort to respond to all of the rejections in the case and to place the application in condition for immediate allowance. Nevertheless, if any undeveloped issues remain or if any issues require clarification, the Examiner is respectfully requested to call the undersigned at the number shown below.

Please charge any additional fees, including any fees for additional extension of time, or credit overpayment to Deposit Account No. 11-1410.

Respectfully submitted,

KNOBBE, MARTENS, OLSON & BEAR, LLP

Dated: 3-9-2004

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